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U . S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LIBRARY

Annual Report on Management Improvement Program

August 31, 1953

Part I: Management Improvement:

(a) Background of Management Improvement in Library:

The Library continued in fiscal year 1953 to utilize in its operation, as it has in past years, the basic principles of scientific management. We have made management improvement an integral part of the daily responsibility of each supervisor. Good supervision must give attention to the study of performance of both individuals and units. Decisions on the program planning, execution, budgeting and other phases of good management have been based on (a) What needs to be done (b) How much can be done (c) A determination of reasonable output per employee (d) Staffing in accordance with these factors.

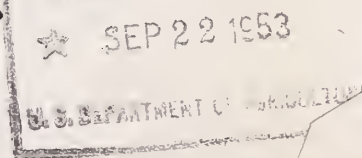
(b) Progress:

Under this policy of operation management improvement goes on in a continuing evolutionary manner. Many of the new procedures developed come as a result of continuing small improvements rather than as special projects. For this reason many of the improvements in routines cannot readily be isolated for reporting but some of the more note-worthy changes made during fiscal year 1953 were the following:

1. Transfer of general branch libraries to state institutions under a cooperative agreement completed during fiscal year 1953 will save approximately one-half the expenditures for this purpose, while providing about 90 per cent of the services formerly provided.

2. Eleven management improvements were put into effect in the Division of Reference and Lending Services, four in the Division of Bibliography, nineteen in the Catalog and Records Section, and others in other parts of the Library. Of these, the study of the use of visible index files in the Catalog and Records Section is typical. This study showed that somewhat more work could be produced, particularly by the slower workers, by converting to 3x5 card trays in lieu of the visible index records, with a savings of equipment and space.

3. Work continued on the use of photography for clerical routines and a cooperative study carried out with eleven other libraries during the year resulted in savings of more than twice the total cost of the equipment and the experiment.



Part II: Conservation and Utilization of Man Power:

As noted in the report on management improvement, standards of performance have been the basis for the Library's staffing program for a number of years.

While we have constantly improved our man power utilization by studies such as those noted above, we have reached the point now where reduced appropriations have made it impossible to provide adequate supervision and, as a result, the quality controls heretofore maintained cannot be maintained as well as they have in the past.